New Disney Musical **Freaky Friday** Puts a Contemporary Spin on a Beloved Classic

**The new musical at the Alley Theatre (June 2-July 2), is a contemporary update of Mary Rodgers’ classic novel, with book by Bridget Carpenter (Friday Night Lights, Parenthood) and a score by Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize winning team of Tom Kitt and Brian Yorkey (Next to Normal, If/Then)**

**HOUSTON** – The Alley Theatre announces the cast and creative team of its 2016-2017 season finale production - Disney’s new musical **Freaky Friday**. The musical, with book by Bridget Carpenter (Friday Night Lights, Parenthood) and score by the Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning team of Tom Kitt and Brian Yorkey (Next to Normal, If/Then) is directed by Cleveland Play House Artistic Director Christopher Ashley (Come From Away, Memphis) and choreographed by Sergio Trujillo (Memphis, Jersey Boys). **Freaky Friday** runs in the Hubbard Theatre June 2 – July 2. Tickets are available at alleytheatre.org

**Freaky Friday** includes Broadway veterans **Heidi Blickenstaff** (Broadway: Something Rotten!, The Addams Family, Disney’s The Little Mermaid) as Katherine Blake and **Emma Hunton** (Broadway: Spring Awakening, Next to Normal) as Ellie Blake.

The full **Freaky Friday** cast also includes **Jeanette Bayardelle** (Broadway: Hair, The Color Purple) as Ms.Meyers/Journalist/Officer Sitz/Ensemble, **Eean Cochran** (Mamma Mia national tour) as Parker/Ensemble, **Joseph Dellger** (Broadway: Ragtime) as Grandpa George/Mr.Blumen/Senor O’Brien/Ensemble, **Sean Graul** as Understudy: Fletcher, **Jessie Hooker** (Legally Blonde national tour) as Savannah/Ensemble, **David Jennings** (Broadway: Once Upon a Mattress with Sarah Jessica Parker) as Mike, **Julia Krohn** (Alley: A Christmas Carol, Peter Pan) as Swing, **Storm Lever** (Off-Broadway: The Wringer) as Teen Ensemble, **Mary Jo McConnell** (Beauty and the Beast national tour) as Grandma Helene/Mrs. Luckenbill/Mrs. Time/Ensemble, **Jake Heston Miller** (Arena Stage: Oliver!) as Fletcher, **Tony Neidenbach** (Anything Goes national tour) as Teen Ensemble, **Jennafer Newberry** (Off-Broadway: Brother, Can You Spare a Dime) as Gretchen/Ensemble, **Chris Ramirez** (Off-Broadway’s Icon) as Adam, **Julian Ramos** (Carnegie Hall: West Side Story) as Wells/Photographer/Ensemble, **Jermaine R. Rembert** (Broadway: Memphis) as Swing, **Alet Taylor** (The Producers national tour) as Torrey/Ensemble, **Jason Sweettooth Williams** (Off-Broadway: Once Upon a Mattress) as Pastor Bruno/Dr. Ehrin/Office Kowalski/Ensemble and **Sumi Yu** (Bucks County Playhouse: The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee) as Hannah/Ensemble.

Hailed by *The Washington Post* as “a polished, peppy, modern fairy tale,” Disney’s new musical **Freaky Friday** is based on the celebrated novel by Mary Rodgers and two hit Disney films. The classic story of a mother and daughter who magically swap bodies for 24 chaotic hours has been given a contemporary spin with a hilarious new book by Bridget Carpenter (Parenthood, Friday Night Lights) and “a driving pop-rock score” (*DC Metro Theatre Arts*) by Tony Award® and Pulitzer Prize winners Tom Kitt and Brian Yorkey (Next to Normal, If/Then). Freaky Friday is directed by recent Tony
Award nominee and Playhouse Artistic Director Christopher Ashley (Come From Away, Memphis) and sharp choreography by Sergio Trujillo (Memphis, Jersey Boys), this dynamic production is “delightfully spunky” with “timeless appeal” (Variety).

The Freaky Friday design team includes music supervisor Bryan Perri, music director/conductor Andrew Graham, scenic design by Beowulf Boritt, costume design by Emily Rebholz, lighting design by Howell Binkley, sound design by Kai Harada and Brian Ronan, and wigs by Wigs and Whiskers.

The Alley’s production of Freaky Friday is a three-theatre co-production with the Cleveland Playhouse, La Jolla Play House and the Alley Theatre.

A television writer, producer and playwright, Bridget Carpenter created the event series 11.22.63 for Bad Robot based on Stephen King’s bestselling novel, which debuted on Hulu February 15, 2016. Prior to 11.22.63, she wrote and co-executive produced all five seasons of the Emmy nominated and Peabody Award-winning series Friday Night Lights. She also was a co-executive producer on Parenthood, and most recently, was executive producer/showrunner of Sundance Channel’s drama series The Red Road. Carpenter’s plays have been produced by Steppenwolf Theatre, the Public Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and many other theaters across the country. She has written several songs for film, including “Basmati Blues” and “Dear Dumb Diary.” Carpenter received a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Princess Grace Award, the Kesselring Prize and the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize. She also received Emmy and WGA nominations for “Friday Night Lights.” Her plays Fall, Up and The Faculty Room have been published by Samuel French.

Tom Kitt received the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for Drama as well as two Tony Awards for Best Score and Best Orchestrations for Next to Normal. His music for Next to Normal also received the Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding New Score. He is the composer of If/Then (Tony Award nomination, Outer Critics Circle Award nomination); High Fidelity (Broadway), Bring It On, The Musical (cocomposer with Lin-Manuel Miranda; Broadway), The Winter’s Tale, All’s Well That Ends Well and Cymbeline (The Public’s NYSF); From Up Here and The Madrid (MTC); Orphans (Broadway) and The Retributionists (Playwrights Horizons). Kitt is also responsible for the music supervision, arrangements and orchestrations for Green Day’s American Idiot on Broadway, and provided additional arrangements for their Grammy Award-winning album 21st Century Breakdown and their album trilogy, ¡Uno! ¡Dos! ¡Tré!. He received an Emmy Award as co-writer (with Lin-Manuel Miranda) for the 2013 Tony Award opening number, Bigger. As a musical director, conductor, arranger and orchestrator, his credits include Pitch Perfect, Pitch Perfect 2, 2Cellos featuring Lang Lang (Live and Let Die), The Kennedy Center Honors, 13, Debbie Does Dallas, Everyday Rapture, Hair, Laugh Whore, Pippin (Deaf West) and These Paper Bullets!. Upcoming musical projects include Grease Live!, SpongeBob Squarepants, The Musical, Dave, Magic Mike, The Visitor and Jagged Little Pill.

Brian Yorkey received the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, as well as the 2009 Tony Award for Best Score, for Next to Normal. He was also nominated for the Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical for Next to Normal, and his work on the show earned him the Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Score. He partnered again with the Next to Normal team on If/Then (Tony Award nominee for Best Score), starring Idina Menzel. Brian co-wrote the libretto for The Last Ship (Outer Critics nomination, with John Logan), with a score by Sting. He is currently working on the original musical Jesus in My Bedroom, with composer Tim Symons, as well as stage musical adaptations of Magic Mike and the Tom McCarthy film The Visitor. He is also adapting Jay Asher's bestselling novel 13 Reasons Why for Netflix, Paramount Television and Anonymous Content. Film projects in active development include Chase for Anonymous
Content and Rosenzweig Films, *Time After Time* for Universal, and *Score!* for Team Downey and Warner Bros. Additional theatre credits include *Making Tracks*, which has played off-Broadway and regionally, the musical adaptation of Ang Lee’s *The Wedding Banquet*, and the play *Book of Jobs* with Alex Glover. Brian has directed off-Broadway and regionally and for seven years was associate artistic director at Village Theatre in Washington state, one of the nation’s leading producers of new musicals. He’s a graduate of Columbia University, where he was artistic director of the Varsity Show, an alum of the BMI/Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop and a proud member of the Dramatists Guild and the WGA.

Christopher Ashley has served as La Jolla Playhouse’s Artistic Director since October, 2007 and was recently nominated for a Tony Award for *Come From Away*. During his tenure, he has helmed the Playhouse’s productions of *Hollywood, Come From Away, Chasing the Song, His Girl Friday, Glengarry Glen Ross, A Dram of Drumhicit, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Restoration* and the acclaimed musicals *Xanadu and Memphis*, which won four 2010 Tony Awards including Best Musical. He also spearheaded the Playhouse’s Without Walls (WoW) series and the Resident Theatre program. Prior to joining the Playhouse, he directed the Broadway productions of *Xanadu* (Drama Desk nomination), *All Shook Up* and *The Rocky Horror Show* (Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Award nominations), as well as the Kennedy Center Sondheim Celebration productions of *Sweeney Todd* and *Merrily We Roll Along*. Other New York credits include: *Blown Sideways Through Life, Jeffrey* (Lucille Lortel and Obie Awards), *The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told, Valhalla, Regrets Only, Wonder of the World, Communicating Doors, Bunny Bunny, The Night Hank Williams Died* and *Fires in the Mirror* (Lucille Lortel Award), among others. Mr. Ashley also directed the feature films *Jeffrey* and *Lucky Stiff*, as well as the American Playhouse production of *Blown Sideways Through Life* for PBS. Mr. Ashley is the recipient of the Princess Grace Award, the Drama League Director Fellowship and an NEA/TCG Director Fellowship.

Performances of *Freaky Friday* are Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday at 7:30 p.m., Friday at 8:00 p.m., Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., and Sunday at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. *Freaky Friday* contains some teen themes.

**TICKETS:** Tickets to *Freaky Friday* are now on sale and start at $35. Discounted tickets are available for any student, regardless of age, with a valid student ID for $16 for designated performances in designated sections. Tickets can be ordered online (alleytheatre.org) or by phone (713.220.5700).

**SPECIAL EVENTS:**
**ROLLING ROADSHOW AT LEVY PARK**
Thursday, May 18th, 2017 | 7:15 PM for book chat; film starts at dusk

Celebrate Mom all week long with this special showing of the 2003 film *Freaky Friday*, based on the Mary Rodgers novel of the same name. Get to know the book, see the movie, and catch the new Disney musical comedy *Freaky Friday* at the Alley Theatre this summer beginning June 2.

**TALKBACKS:** The Alley Theatre will present a Designer Talk in the Texas Room (4th Floor) at 1:30 p.m. on June 4 prior to the matinée performance of *Freaky Friday*. The discussion will feature the creative team of *Freaky Friday*, giving audiences a behind-the-scenes look at the design process.

The Alley Theatre will present Artist TalkBacks following the June 10 (2:30 p.m.) and June 13 (7:30 p.m.) performances of *Freaky Friday*. These discussions will feature cast and artistic staff.
The Alley Theatre will also present an Alley In Context discussion during the run of **Freaky Friday**. The date is TBD. Please check alleytheatre.org for updates. Alley In Context discussions feature civic leaders, local academics, and community members discussing the themes of the play and how they are reflected in our lives today. Designer Talks, Artist TalkBacks and Alley In Context discussions are free and open to the public.

**GROUP SALES:** Groups of 10 or more can receive special concierge services and select discounts by calling the Group Sales Department at 713.315.3346

**PRESS MATERIALS:**
- Trailer: [https://youtu.be/NfSJHlfx1yw](https://youtu.be/NfSJHlfx1yw)

**SPONSORS:** **Freaky Friday** is sponsored by Premier Sponsors The Humphreys Foundation and The Cullen Trust for the Performing Arts; Honorary Producers Anne and Albery Chao and Connie and Roger Plank; Associate Producers John and Janet Carrig, Carol and Mike Linn, Butch and Carmen Mach, Alexandra and Parker Meeks, Christina and Stephen Morse, and Petrello Family Foundation and Supporting Sponsor EY. The Alley Theatre is supported by the 2016-2017 season sponsor United Airlines, the official airline of the Alley Theatre.

**2017-2018 TICKET AND SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION:** Season Tickets can be ordered online (alleytheatre.org) or by phone (713.220.5700). Subscribers can purchase a 5-play package containing **Cleo**, **The Great Society**, **Picasso at the Lapin Agile**, **Satchmo at the Waldorf**, and **Holmes and Watson**; prices range from $125-$465. An 8-play package is also available containing all the plays in the 5-play package plus **Describe the Night**, **Lover**, **Beloved** and **The Cake**, with prices from $198-$649. Subscribers may purchase priority tickets for **Alfred Hitchcock’s The 39 Steps**, **A Christmas Carol** and **The Santaland Diaries** before going on sale to the general public. Groups of 10 or more may reserve discounted tickets now by calling 713.315.3346.

Single tickets for **Alfred Hitchcock’s The 39 Steps** go on sale May 15, 2017 and can be purchased either online (alleytheatre.org) or by phone (713.220.5700). The remaining productions for the 2017-2018 Season will go on sale on August 28, 2017. Discounted tickets are available for any student, regardless of age, with a valid student ID for $16 for designated performances in designated sections. Military and senior discounts are available. Visit alleytheatre.org/discounts for more information.

**ABOUT THE ALLEY THEATRE:** The Alley Theatre, one of America’s leading not-for-profit theatres, is a nationally recognized performing arts company led by Artistic Director Gregory Boyd and Managing Director Dean R. Gladden. Home to a Resident Company of actors, the Alley creates a wide-ranging repertoire and innovative productions of classics, neglected modern plays, and premieres. Alley All New, the initiative to commission and develop new work year round, features the Alley All New Festival each season presenting workshops and readings of new plays and musicals in process. Additionally the Alley serves 65,000 students annually with award-winning education and community programs including in-school arts integration residencies, school tours and student matinees. A recipient of the Special Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre, the Alley has brought productions to Broadway, 40 American cities including New York’s Lincoln Center and internationally to London, Berlin, Paris, and St. Petersburg throughout its 70 year history.
After a year-long, $46.5 million renovation during the 2014-15 season, the Alley Theatre now has one of the most technically advanced non-profit theatre complexes in the nation. With more than 450 performances in 2016-2017, the Alley will produce more shows than all other performing arts organizations in the Houston Theater District combined.